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SELF IMMOLATION;

OR, THE

SACRIFICE OF LOVE.

A PLAY,

IN THREE ACTS:

By AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE.

FAITHFULLY TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

By HENRY NEUMAN, Esq.

L O N D O N :

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PREFACE

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

THE most remarkable works of fancy, which have been lately produced by German genius, are universally admired throughout Europe. They display a rare union of boldness of imagination with an exquisite conception of the deepest agitations of the finer feelings of the human heart: And they delineate characters, drawn from general nature,—not the creatures of local circumstances and artificial manners,—with a felicity which is, at present, less common in the original poems, dramatic pieces, or novels of France or Britain.

Of the dramatists of Germany, KOTZEBUE, throwing into his dramas more of the probabilities of real life—than the rest, yet animating them with a not less abundant infusion of wild pathos and sublimity, has been, with just taste, preferred, as the fittest for translation into English, and for close imitation in compositions for the British stage. There is, in his works, something exceedingly congenial to the cast of English character, and to the predominant tone of English

sentiment. It is SHAKESPEARE, without his quibbles, his negligences, his incongruities, his violations of the most indispenfible dramatic probabilities, yet, ftill rich in all thofe energies of genius, which have fo expreffively difplayed the ingenuous ardour and fimplicity of youthful love and hope, the fecret remorfes of guilt, the melt-ings of tender, agonized affection, the wild conflicts of defpair, the shrinkings, the revulfions, the *deliquia* of human fenfibility, whether it be lacerated by the actual miferies of fortune, or tortured by the play of an imagination more refined in its cruelties, than the caprice of the tyrant, or the experimenting hand of the philofopher. It is SHAKESPEARE, ftill endowed with all that moral wifdom which renders his works the beft fchool of civil fagacity, and makes the deep ftudy of them, almoft a perfect fubftitute for real experience in the varied fcenes of human life.

The NATURAL SON, the COUNT OF BUR-GUNDY, and other pieces of KOTZEBUE, have been tranflated into Englifh, with an approbation of the Britifh Public, that encouraged the prefent tranflator to attempt the following verfion of the SACRIFICE OF LOVE; a drama which KOTZEBUE himfelf is known to efteem one of the happieft efforts of his genius.

It is, in truth, a very beautiful and interefting
com-

composition. It represents characters, manners, and fortunes taken from *middle* and *domestic* life, through a series of scenes in which the tragic greatly predominates, but which end in all the joy, if not the light gaiety, of a comic catastrophe. It is distinguished by admirable unity and simplicity of *plot*. The *concatenation* of the successive scenes, is so eminently skilful; that each one appears to follow that which goes before it, by a necessary connexion; and that every succeeding scene,—nay, almost every turn in the dialogue, seems to advance the action, by some steps, nearer to its completion. In the progress of the *Action*, curiosity is, at once, so gratified, and so provoked; every successive discovery is so managed, to make us the more anxious to know what is yet concealed; the pathos deepens in such a gradation; and the characters, as we become more and more acquainted with them, still interest our sympathy so much the more powerfully: that it will be exceedingly difficult to find any piece of fictitious history, whether narrative or dramatic, more capable of entirely absorbing the attention of the reader, and of suspending him, almost to the final cessation of the dialogue, in a solemn, still, and breathless anxiety of hope and fear. That contrast of humours, situations, and passions, which often produces such happy effects
on

on the stage, is, in some of the following scenes, very skilfully exhibited. Every different character is, with great delicacy of art, made to unfold itself by speech or action in the progress of the piece,—not unseasonably displayed in a formal daubing, to which speech and action might afterwards give the lie. Situations of the most affecting,—yet not insufferably horrible,—distress, which it is possible for human fancy to conceive, are, in this piece, exquisitely pourtrayed. And states of the human feelings are here represented, which, although in nature they may have never occurred, are yet true to nature. You shall not see persons in real life, in the conditions here imagined: but, if it were possible that you could see them, they would reason and feel, just as has been fancied by KOTZEBUE. The train of the Dialogue is, every where, exquisitely adapted to express, by the reciprocations of speech from the persons, the current of agitated thought in the mind. A word, an attitude, an exclamation, is often wonderfully expressive! All those beauties of general poesy, which are not inconsistent with the particular purposes of the drama, are copiously scattered over the piece. The general tendency of the whole is eminently favourable to the interests of truth, virtue, and sober-minded propriety of conduct in ordinary life.

The *place* of the action in the metropolis of England. And, if the Author have committed some petty errors, in the representation of English manners, and in the supposition of local circumstances: the compliment he has paid to the national character, by attributing to it so much honesty, and virtuous refinement of feeling; cannot but sufficiently compensate for those trivial mistakes, in the estimation of all readers of genuine taste.

The TRANSLATION is executed by a person to whom the German language is his native speech. He may, therefore, perhaps, without vanity, pretend to the merit of thoroughly understanding the *original* composition of KOTZEBUE, in all the force and all the delicacy of its varied phrase. Whether he have, with correctness and felicity, accomplished the attempt to transfuse that composition into the justly corresponding phraseology of the English language—he respectfully leaves it with the British public, to judge.

H. N.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ROBERT MAXWELL, *a decayed Merchant.*

ARABELLA, *his Wife.*

HARRY, *a Boy, his Son.*

An OLD BLIND LADY, his Mother.

JANE, *Maid Servant in the House.*

LANDLORD *of the House in which MAXWELL lives.*

HARRINGTON, *a rich Wine Merchant.*

WALWYN.

DEMPSTER, *a Gambler.*

A JEW.

FLOOD.

DUMFRIES.

JOHN HARTOPP, *a Porter.*

A SERVANT, and other Persons.

SELF IMMOLATION;

OR,

THE SACRIFICE OF LOVE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Spacious and elegant Room, poorly furnished.*

ARABELLA is employed in Needlework. Her MOTHER-IN-LAW, old and blind, is seated in an Arm-Chair, with her Hands crossed on her Lap.

MOTHER.

TOM!

Arabella. What is your pleasure, dear mother?

Mother. Nothing particular, daughter; I want Tom.

Arabella. (*Perplexed*) Tom—is ill.

Mother. Is he? Poor fellow!—Well then, another may come.

Arabella. Cannot I serve you?

Mother. If you please. I wish to have my breakfast. I have already asked thrice for it.

Arabella. Your breakfast—Yes, dear Mother. (*She lays down her work, and folds her hands with a deep sigh.*)

Mother. Unless I have my tea and toast as soon as I rise in the morning,—I am ill for the day. I have been accustomed, these fifty years, to breakfast the moment I rise; and it does not look well, daughter, when an old blind woman is obliged to wait hours for a little hot water.

Arabella. Excuse us, dear mother; Jane is gone for some bread; and you know, she is rather slow.

Mother. But why send Jane? Have we not other servants in the house?

B

Arabella.

Arabella. (*Aside, with a sigh*) Yes, we had. (*Aloud.*) We have lately endeavoured to do with fewer servants.

Mother. Very well; it is prudently done! When I was married, my late husband and I were very poor, indeed; and when my Robert, your husband, was born, I put myself to many, many, little inconveniencies, that my child might want nothing. Now, it is your turn to make these sacrifices. When children are small, the mother should forego many of her wishes, to provide for their wants.

Arabella. We do, with the utmost pleasure.

Mother. Do not take this amiss, daughter; but, I must say, that, for some time past, great disorder has prevailed in this house. Something or other is always wanting. I am blind; I cannot see,—it is true. Yet I can discern more than gives me pleasure.

Arabella. My Robert, you know, has met with misfortunes in trade.

Mother. He has, child; but no merchant is always fortunate.

Arabella. His loss from Belton's failure, was very great.

Mother. But Robert is not a bankrupt.

Arabella. (*Aside with a sigh*) Ah, that you spoke the truth!

Mother. His property was great: and though a part be lost, his mother's breakfast should not be wanting. I know my son: he will never forget, that, at the risk of my health, I supplied him myself with his first food. I was then sickly; yet I got no wet-nurse for him. And I am confident, he would rather deprive himself of something, than suffer his old blind mother to want.

Arabella. He does deny himself, to supply you, mother.

Mother. And let me tell you, daughter, what you do for me now, your little Harry shall do for you, when you are old.

Arabella. Dear mother—you do not suppose, I hope,—that I—that through any neglect of mine—

Mother. Well! well! I would not judge unkindly.

Arabella. (*Aside.*) Good God! the whole night through, have I been at work!

SCENE II.—Enter HARRY.

Harry. Pray mother, is it time now?

Arabella. Presently, my dear.

Harry.

Harry. (*Confidentially and in a half whisper*) I'll tell you what, Mamma,—I am hungry.

Arabella. (*Suppressing her tears*) Presently, child; only wait till Jane comes back.

Mother. Poor boy! he has had no breakfast then!—Good God! one should think, there was not a morsel of bread in the house!

Arabella. (*Aside*) Alas!

Mother. Come this way, Harry; are you hungry?

Harry. I am, grandmother.

Mother. Have you had nothing to eat, this morning?

Harry. No, grandmother.

Mother. Poor thing! You should have saved some of your bread and butter, last night.

Harry. I had not a bit, last night.

Mother. Is it possible? did your unkind parents give you nothing?

Harry. Father and Mother had nothing to themselves.

Mother. Why did you not come to me?

Harry. I did, and saw you eat your soup; I thought you would have left me some; but you eat all.

Arabella. Harry eat so heartily of currants, yesterday, in the afternoon, that I was afraid another meal before he went to bed, might make him ill.

Mother. Nonsense! children should be fed well; their growth requires a good deal of nourishment.

Arabella. (*Aside*) How readily would I foster him with my blood!

Mother. Go, child, and ask your Mamma to give you a roll.

Harry. (*Goes to Arabella*) Pray, dear Mamma, do, give me a roll.

Arabella. But one moment's patience, my dear; Jane will soon be here.

Mother. But, for goodness sake, why is he to wait till Jane returns? when my Robert was of his age, he would often tease me, and draw me away from my work; yet I did not care for that; I always got him what he wanted.—But now, ladies are grown so fashionable and so indolent—

Arabella. You wrong me, dear mother; you do, indeed! it happens at present, that there are no rolls in the house.

Mother. So much the worse; in a well regulated family, such things can never be wanting.

Harry. Don't be angry grandmama. I will go and look for Jane. (*Runs off.*)

SCENE III.

Mother. Yes, daughter, I should deserve censure myself, were I to be silent. I am old and blind; work I cannot, but I must speak my mind; do not take it amiss.

Arabella. Your parental admonitions shall be ever dear to me; even when they wound my heart.

Mother. You know, when my son married you, I did not greatly approve of your union.

Arabella. I was poor.

Mother. During eight years, has a word dropped from my lips, like a reproach on that head?

Arabella. No, dear, good mother, never!

Mother. Certainly, I had been better satisfied, had you possessed some fortune; but then, I always said to myself—love goes a great way. My late husband, poor man, at first had no property; nor had I; but we were very happy. My son is a rich man, through our industry; for God's sake! let him choose as his heart directs! if the young woman is poor, she will be grateful, and the more readily nurse me when I am old. I want but little; but that little I ought not to be at the trouble of asking for. She will always have it ready, before I open my lips.

Arabella. Surely, it has always been my most earnest wish—

Mother. Aye, daughter, it has been—it *has been*—but it is no more. Every thing has of late taken a most singular turn, and grows worse daily. Old people are a little difficult, and are fond of order. What to young people seems the effect of caprice, often is indispensably necessary to the old. The variety of youthful enjoyments is so great, that some may well be spared; but old age is confined to so few enjoyments, that it can ill afford to lose any. And yet, daughter, (*with a tone of increasing animation*) I will rather suffer want myself, than that my poor little grandson be neglected! this goes to my very soul! you are
his

his mother; you may love him dearly, very dearly indeed! but I am his grandmother, and love him still more.
(*Arabella silently wipes away her tears*)

SCENE IV.—*Enter HARRY and JANE.*

Harry. (*Skiping up to Arabella*) Mamma, Mamma, here is Jane. Now I am to have a roll!

Arabella. (*Rises hastily, and draws Jane aside*) Well! have you brought me any money?

Jane. No, Madam, I have not indeed. Five places I have been at; and—it is a shame—they offer me no more than half-a-crown for such a pair of ruffles as these are!

Arabella. Half-a-crown! the materials cost me as much.

Jane. Certainly, they did, and so I told them; but these unfeeling wretches take advantage of the distress of their fellow christians to enrich themselves.

Arabella. Distress!—Distress indeed!—Run back, Jane; take the half-crown; bring tea for the old lady; and rolls for the boy. At dinner time, God may befriend us. I can no more—my fingers are sore with working.

Jane. (*Wiping her eyes*) Poor, dear Lady!

Harry. Jane, won't you give me my rolls?

Jane. Come along, my little man, you shall chuse them at the baker's yourself.

Mother. Jane, bring me my tea.

Jane. Immediately, madam. (*Goes out with Harry*)

Mother. Immediately!—For this hour past have I received the same answer! I perceive I grow burthensome in this house. Myself and my chair are both out of fashion; we are always in the way.

Arabella. (*Aside*) Oh God! thou alone know'st I do what I can! Assist me to bear more than poverty—assist me to bear unjust reproach, and to remain silent!

SCENE V.—*Enter MAXWELL.*

(*Maxwell enters with a dejected countenance; on seeing him, Arabella endeavours to appear more composed.*)

I

Maxwell.

Maxwell. Good morning, mother. Good morning, dear wife.

Arabella. How are you, my love? you went abroad very early this morning.

Maxwell. (*In a half whisper to Arabella*) Yet came too late every where! (*Arabella casts down her eyes, and heaves a sigh*)

Mother. Let me tell you, Robert, your people are not worth a rush. I mean the servants.

Maxwell. (*With a tone of sarcasm and anguish*) The servants!

Mother. One may call them twenty times, and not one comes.

Maxwell. I suppose so.

Mother. They preserve no respect for me.

Maxwell. Nor for me, mother.

Mother. Well then, turn the unmannerly fellows out of the house.

Maxwell. I have done so already.

Mother. Have you indeed? Are they all discharged?

Maxwell. All.

Mother. Hum! hum!—John, however, you might have kept; he used to play so obligingly with Harry.

Maxwell. Perhaps it was for that reason he made free with the child's little box, which he took with him.

Mother. Was he so dishonest? it had a gold coin of Charles the First in it, a present of my godmother to me. But, William,—is he gone too? he was a pious young man, and often in the evening read me a chapter in the Bible.

Maxwell. I imagine he fell in love with your bible.

Mother. Which bible are you speaking of?

Maxwell. The large one, ornamented with silver. He packed it up with his things.

Mother. The villain! Your poor father set down your birth-day in it, with his own hand.

Maxwell. My birth-day is not lost for that.

Mother. No! no! I have it by heart; the 14th of February 1772.

Maxwell. (*Aside, wringing his hands*) Who will tell me the day of my death?

Mother. Old James was then a brisk lad; he was sent on the full gallop, to my mother at Greenwich. You have not discharged old James, I hope?

Maxwell,

Maxwell. No; he discharged himself.

Mother. Indeed! But why so?

Maxwell. I cannot tell. About three weeks since, I enquired after him one morning, but he was not at home.

Mother. And is not returned?

Maxwell. Not yet.

Mother. I dare say, child, some misfortune has befallen him. Poor old man!

Maxwell. Yes, mother; the greatest misfortune that can befall a man—he has become a rogue.

Mother. Impossible!

Maxwell. He took up several hundreds of pounds in my name.

Mother. The hoary villain!

Maxwell. A mere trifle, dear mother! This world of ours, you know, is composed of the miserable leavings of all the rest. To be old, is to have been more frequently cheated than others; and an old man is a man who knows a great many rogues.

Mother. Robert, Robert, that is a wicked speech. A great deal depends on our manner of treating people. When there is proper management in a house, and the servants are duly paid their wages, they never think of robbing their masters in this manner.

Maxwell. But now, mother, I defy any one to rob me.

Mother. When, indeed, confusion reigns throughout the house, and the mistress takes care of nothing—

Maxwell. (*Impatiently*) How, mother! Hold, mother!

Mother. When parents and children are alike neglected—

Maxwell. Mother, for God's sake!

Mother. When the mistress is too indolent to go herself, and make a cup of tea for an old blind mother, or cut a bit of bread for an only child——

Maxwell. (*Throwing himself into the arms of his wife*) Arabella, forgive me!

Arabella. (*With a kind smile*) I have nothing to forgive.

Maxwell. (*In a low voice*) Reproaches so unmerited!

Arabella. They would wound to the heart, if they were merited.

Maxwell.

Maxwell. To calumniate an angel!

Arabella. She means no ill.

Maxwell. A wife, who, these five weeks past, has supported mother and child with the work of her hands!

Arabella. There are few wives that can reckon up five weeks equally happy.

SCENE VI.—Enter JANE with tea, and HARRY with rolls.

Jane. Here is tea, madam.

Mother. At last! (*Jane places the tea before the old lady and pours out a cup*)

Harry. Good morning, papa. Look here, what fine rolls I have got!

Maxwell. But have you thanked your mother for them?

Harry. No, papa, I have not.

Maxwell. (*In a voice struggling for utterance, after taking Harry up and holding him to Arabella*) Oh! thank her! thank her!

Harry. Thank you, dear mamma.

Arabella. (*Kissing the child*) But why this, Robert? Can there be any thing more pleasing to a mother than to see, in the hands of her child, a morsel of bread which she herself has earned?

Mother. What is this? This is not my cup! (*Jane looks in a perplexed manner at Arabella*) You know, Robert, that for these ten years past, I have constantly used the cup, which John Pringle brought me from China; and now they have given me another, not half so smooth and handsome!

Maxwell. Where is the cup?

Arabella. (*In a low voice to Maxwell*) I have sold it, dear husband. Harry had no shoes; and I hoped she would not perceive the difference. (*Maxwell casts down his eyes mournfully*)—Will you forgive me, dear mother? I always made it my business, you know, to wash your cup myself; and I always did it, with the utmost care—but yesterday—somehow—I know not how—I broke your cup.

Mother. Broke it!—Well, well, daughter, my old heart will also break at last!—I say it, once more; things grow

grow worse and worse every day. The bible is gone; the child's plaything is carried off; and now my cup is broken!—Son, son, if thy poor father could know it—remember his last words—“May my blessing be converted into a curse, should your mother ever complain of you!”—Now, I do not complain; I will not convert thy father's blessing into a curse; I will suffer, and not complain!—Come, Harry, lead me into my room; ride about on thy hobby horse, and be as noisy as thou wilt, that my heart and the consciences of thy parents may be stunned to rest! (*Exit, conducted by Harry and Jane*)

SCENE VII.

Maxwell. (*With a laugh of agony*) Ha, ha, ha!

Arabella. (*Taking his hand in hers*) Dear, good Robert, put confidence in the God of mercy!

Maxwell. (*Withdrawing his hand, and looking earnestly at hers*) What is this? Blood!

Arabella. I pricked my finger with a needle; that's all.

Maxwell. Let me see—Good God! your fingers are all torn and bleeding!

Arabella. (*with assumed carelessness*) 'Tis owing entirely to the childish vanity of having delicate hands. The skin at last grows so tender, that it can bear no work.

Maxwell. (*Deeply affected*) Good God!

Arabella. Now, how you take that again! Often, very often, have I seen you in the sun at mid-day, till the sweat has poured down from your brow. Is a drop of sweat of less value than a drop of blood?

Maxwell. Have mercy upon me, thou author of my involuntary existence! Point out to me some honest livelihood, however mean it may be!—Oh, Arabella, nothing have I left untried! The whole of this morning have I run from house to house, to get a clerk's place on the lowest terms; in vain;—nobody wants me. Oh God! thou knowest, that while I was prosperous, I would have given any person in distress, that applied to me, a news-paper to copy, rather than not give him the means of earning a few shillings!

Arabella. What has not succeeded to day, may succeed to-morrow.

C

Maxwell.

Maxwell. To write, to keep accounts, and to be an honest man, is all I can boast of.—When a boy, I learned to work at a turning-loom; and yesterday I made a trial of that. I intended to make toys for children, and carry them to market; but you know I sprained my ankle two months since, and it is too weak to turn the wheel.

Arabella. The wheel of our fortune will turn at last.

Maxwell. I tell you, my ankle is too weak.

Arabella. Our sufferings are unmerited!

Maxwell. Is that a consolation?

Arabella. Assuredly, Robert, it is a powerful consolation. Hunger scarcely gnaws, where conscience does not gnaw; despair overwhelms only the guilty; hope is sweet only to the honest mind; and confidence is the attendant of innocence.

Maxwell. Hope! in what?—Confidence! in whom?

Arabella. In God, and men.

Maxwell. Men? Ha! Ha!—Had you been a witness, this morning—

Arabella. Did you make your distress known?

Maxwell. (*Haughtily*) Heaven forbid!

Arabella. But, how should any one know?—

Maxwell. Aye! that is the point! such is man. He that does not appear before him, with wooden legs, or covered with rags, that cannot cry aloud—I am wretched—I ask charity—is passed by. Nobody will take the trouble to trace sorrow in pale cheeks, and aid the timid, whose lips are closed with shame.

Arabella. Have not you often done this? and would you be so vain as to suppose there are not others good like yourself?

Maxwell. No! No! by no means!—Yet where?—But, stay—I am wrong—one I found this morning—

Arabella. Well?

Maxwell. The only one of whom I would not accept a drop of water in the burning thirst of a fever.

Arabella. I don't understand you—

Maxwell. (*After a pause*) Walwyn.

Arabella. Walwyn! You did well. No, from him you must not accept of any thing; though he deserves, more than any other person, the confidence of a generous mind.

Maxwell. We met near St. Paul's—"Good morning, Maxwell; how fare you?"—"Very well."—"You look poorly."

poorly."—"Some time since, I hurt my leg, which obliged me to keep my bed, and has made me rather thin."—He looked stedfastly in my face. I dare say, I looked confused. He seized my hand; and I gaped with astonishment.—"Should you need a friend?" said he, in a tone which from any other lips, would have subdued my heart. I answered carelessly, and with a forced smile—"Friends we want daily."—"You will not understand me," he replied; "and perhaps I suspect the reason. But a true friend you should never reject, in whatever form he may appear. Can I be of service to you? Try me; and call me monster, if I fail you!" Here he pressed my hand, and hastened away from me.

Arabella. (*Greatly affected*) Walwyn is a worthy man.

Maxwell. (*After a pause, during which he observes Arabella with some degree of uneasiness*) Ah! I should not have told you this!

Arabella. (*Gently chiding him*) Why not?

Maxwell. A man whom once you loved!

Arabella. I am your wife.

Maxwell. A man who undoubtedly loves you still!

Arabella. Men like him may love me.

Maxwell. To whom you would have given your hand, but for my unhappy intervention.

Arabella. Pray, my love, no more of this.

Maxwell. Poor Walwyn was compelled to give way to the wealthy Maxwell.—Now Walwyn is rich, and Maxwell a beggar.

Arabella. Does that increase *his* worth, or lessen *your's*?

Maxwell. But for me, you were now a happy wife.

Arabella. Am I unhappy? (*Maxwell takes her hand and points to her fingers*) That is no reply. Such sores heal easily. Have I nothing that may be envied in my fortune?—I am the mother of a lovely boy: I am the wife of an honest man: he is poor, but not poor in his love for me: he has been defrauded of his property, but no one shall beguile him of his domestic happiness! He who can still give and receive joy, has no right to complain of wretchedness.

Maxwell. 'Tis in vain, dear wife; you cannot efface from my mind, the agonizing thought, that I have entangled you in my misery. When I first addressed you, and the

gentle Walwyn withdrew his pretensions ; your heart belonged to him.

Arabella. Yes, I loved him. I confessed it to you, and my frankness gained your confidence. Shall I forfeit that confidence by the same confession, now that it would be without foundation ?

Maxwell. You became mine, because your father interposed his authority ; because you were poor, and he longed to see you decently provided for.

Arabella. And now I am yours, by my own choice. Nature has united us with her strongest tie ; you are the father of my child.

Maxwell. Which your feeble hands must support.

Arabella. The clergyman, who married us, spoke to us of both good and ill.

Maxwell. Woe, woe be to me, wretched being ! This noble, this adorable woman might have been happy by the side of a worthy man ! But forth came the wealthy Maxwell, possessed of thousands, not earned by him, but inherited from his father,—improved this miserable advantage, and purchased a heart whose value far exceeds all the riches of Peru.—He stole the best of wives—to—to let her perish with hunger.—Woe, woe to me, wretched man ! (*He grows faint, endeavours to conceal it, and takes hold of the back of a chair.*)

Arabella. How ingenious you are to torture yourself ! What do we want ? We are poor ; that's all. May not one single moment change our fate ? On seeing, yesterday, the burial of our neighbour's child—his only child—on seeing the sorrow-stricken father tottering behind the coffin—on hearing the mother's cries through the window—you said yourself—These people are still more unfortunate than we !

Maxwell. But, the child did not perish for hunger !—

Arabella. No ; nor shall our child perish for hunger. He has a mother who, when she can work no longer, will not be ashamed to beg for her child. (*Maxwell staggers, and is obliged to sit down*) Dear Robert, what's the matter ? you are ill ?

Maxwell. No, no.—I am very well—only a little faint—

Arabella. No wonder ; you have been running about since

since the dawn—perhaps you have not even broken your fast!

Maxwell. Yes; I have.

Arabella. Where, pray?

Maxwell. At the coffee house.

Arabella. Robert! I know you had no money!

Maxwell. I had a few shillings left.

Arabella. For some days past, it seems, you purposely absent yourself, when our scanty dinners and suppers are served up—

Maxwell. (*With some bitterness*) If you have plenty, invite guests!

Arabella. Robert, you do not deprive yourself, I hope, of food?—Do you? (*With great anxiety*) Look at me!—Where have you dined of late?

Maxwell. (*With a forced smile*) You think, I suppose, that I have fasted.—Be comforted, my Arabella; I have a numerous acquaintance: and though they may fear my asking for assistance; a bit of dinner they will not refuse me.

SCENE VIII.—*Enter a MESSENGER with a letter.*

Messenger. (*Delivering the letter*) Mr. Robert Maxwell. (*Going*)

Maxwell. Is no answer required?

Messenger. No, Sir, (*Exit*)

Maxwell. (*Reads*) "Mr. Edward Gibson, the banker, has an order to advance Mr. Robert Maxwell the sum of one thousand pounds, to enable him to carry on his interrupted business. Should fortune smile on him again, his creditor will make himself known."

Arabella. Well, Robert, are there not still some good men in the world?

Maxwell. (*Sits long in profound meditation; then again looks steadfastly at the note*) I do not know the hand.

Arabella. What does that matter? It is the hand of a worthy man.

Maxwell. (*After a pause, rises from his chair, and holds the paper up to Arabella*) Do you know the hand?

Arabella. (*Casting a slight glance at the note*) I do not.

Maxwell.

Maxwell. Arabella—you never yet deceived me—I conjure you by the life of our only child—Do you know the hand? (*Arabella remains silent*) It is Walwyn's hand—is it not? (*Arabella bursts into tears, and withdraws*) No! no!—rather starve!—Stand I will—or must fall—but I will not be crushed!

SCENE IX.—Enter LANDLORD.

Landlord. Good morning, Sir.

Maxwell. Good morning, my friend.

Landlord. These rooms are very fine—an't they?

Maxwell. Certainly, very fine.

Landlord. Handsome rooms, indeed—convenient, and elegant! But they also cost a rare deal of money—upon my soul, they did!

Maxwell. I have no doubt.

Landlord. A load of money, hard earned!—have nothing but this house here—must live upon the rent—you understand me.

Maxwell. Yes, I do.

Landlord. You are a fine gentleman, Sir—a very civil gentleman;—but for these four months past, I have not seen a shilling of rent.

Maxwell. Indeed, I am extremely sorry it has happened so.

Landlord. So am I. But that won't do. I must have money.

Maxwell. But a little patience—

Landlord. Aye, aye!—Patience is a special fine virtue; and with plenty of money one may be as patient as you please. But with me, it is from hand to mouth;—the stomach knows of no patience.

Maxwell. I beg only a few days longer.

Landlord. A day, do you see, contains twenty-four hours; and in twenty-four hours, one wants three meals. One word for all, I can wait no longer. To-morrow I must have my money, or provide a lodging for you which will not cost you a farthing.

Maxwell. Hard hearted man!

Landlord. Hard or soft, just as it happens. When I see money, I am as soft as melting wax.

Maxwell.

Maxwell. You will not, I hope, thrust out of doors, a blind helpless woman, seventy years old!

Landlord. Thrust her out of doors! Heaven forbid! That would be so rude!—I shall lead her out of the house very gently.

Maxwell. And leave her in the street?

Landlord. What's that to me? I did not build my house to make it a hospital for blind women.

Maxwell. (*With vehemence*) Be gone, Sir! leave the room! while I inhabit these apartments, I am the master here.

Landlord. Very well—the mastership won't last long, I believe.—“Be gone”—leave the room,” indeed!—Let me tell you, my fine gentleman, such language won't do for people with empty purses and empty pockets. The rich have the privilege of being rude, that one puts up with; that's the custom; money makes amends for every thing; but without money the finest gentleman in the land must stoop, and be humble, or he marches to Newgate. Do you understand me?—(*Exit.*)

SCENE X.

Maxwell. Full well do I understand you!—Wife and child reduced to beggary!—my old blind mother in the streets!—and I in a gaol!—Belton, Belton! thou who didst rob thy creditors, and by a fraudulent bankruptcy didst plunge me into this misery—couldst thou behold this extreme distress of an innocent family?—Oh! never have I yet cursed any human being! Belton, I curse thee!

SCENE XI. *Enter a Jew.*

Jew. Good day to you, Sir.

Maxwell. That grant me, gracious God!

Jew. You owe me fifty pounds.

Maxwell. I know I do.

Jew. Can you pay me?

Maxwell. No.

Jew. That's very bad indeed. (*Maxwell shrugs his shoulders*) I have got your note for the sum.

Maxwell.

Maxwell. I know you have.

Jew. And know also what I can do?

Maxwell. Yes; throw me into goal.

Jew. Yet, I should not like to do that.

Maxwell. I am obliged to you for your compassion.

Jew. You were formerly a regular honest man.

Maxwell. Honest I am still.

Jew. You used to pay me very punctually indeed.

Maxwell. But, now I am undone.

Jew. Hum!—What shall I do?

Maxwell. What you please. But, before you make your resolution, pray step into this room; you will there find a wife, pale with grief, a helpless babe, and an old blind matron.

Jew. But you—do not take it amiss—you are a man of information, and accustomed to industrious pursuits—

Maxwell. Sir, for the last three days have I run about with the perseverance of the ant, in quest of some person who would give me bread for work.—Sir, you are a Jew; to you, I will confess it—to a Christian I would not. For these two days, not a morsel of any thing have I tasted—*(the Jew puts his hand hastily into his pocket, and seizing Maxwell's hand, endeavours to slip a linen purse into it)* No, no! that must not be.

Jew. Why not?—Because I am a Jew?

Maxwell. Fie, fie! if such were my sentiments, I should deserve my sufferings!

Jew. Well then, take it.

Maxwell. I am unable to repay you.

Jew. The God of my forefathers will repay me.

Maxwell. God! if it was thy will, that I should be poor, why didst thou plant this pride in my bosom!—No, Sir, charity I cannot accept: but procure me work, and I will thank you. Grant me some respite, with regard to my debt; and I, with my wife and child, will thank you.

Jew. Sir, I was a stranger to your misfortunes—otherwise I should not have come to ask my money.—No, by the God of my forefathers, I would not have come for it! farewell, Sir. *(He tears the note and throws it away)*—There lies the paltry scrap! *(Goes out hastily)*

Maxwell. Sir! Sir!—*(Is going after him, but seeing the Jew gone, he stops)* Yes, yes, there yet are men—but not among Christians. Blockhead that I was, to pass by an

Israelite at the Exchange, as if the humanity of that people had been drowned in the Red Sea.—Blockhead that I was, not to recollect the important truth, that in ninety-nine cases of an hundred, the *despised* is more worthy than the *man who despises him*. Yes, I will once more crawl about; in every public place exhibit the image of my distress; this Jew has rekindled the smothered spark of my confidence in human kindness. Among a million of inhabitants, surely I may find *one*, who has a letter to write, or an account to sum up.

SCENE XII. *Enter HARRY.*

Harry. I have eaten enough, papa, will you save me this roll?

Maxwell. I save bread for you, child!—ten diamonds rather than one roll!

Harry. Diamonds!—I have none.

Maxwell. Let me see that roll. (*The boy gives it him*) You have eaten enough, did you say?

Harry. Yes, papa, quite enough. (*He amuses himself with playthings; Maxwell is silent for some time, eyeing the roll with desire, and an evident struggle between his hunger and his regard for the boy's wants*)

Maxwell. When do you think you shall be hungry again?

Harry. Oh, very soon!

Maxwell. Soon? (*He puts the roll on the table, and turns away with evident uneasiness*) How long is it till dinner-time?

Harry. About an hour, papa.

Maxwell. (*Looking eagerly at the roll*) Before dinner, you will not eat any thing? shall you?

Harry. No, papa. (*Maxwell reaches out his hand for the roll*) But at present, I always get so little.

Maxwell. Little! (*Withdrawing his hand*)

Harry. Mamma, to be sure, helps me often from her own plate; but then, she has not got much herself.

Maxwell. (*Hastily*) There, there! take care of your roll yourself.

Harry. And Phylax—papa—poor old Phylax—you may count every rib he has;—yesterday, he stole a bone in

the landlord's kitchen, and got such a beating—poor creature!

Maxwell. My Phylax!—Child, you mistake. The poor old dog can hardly crawl.

Harry. But he crawled down the stair-case.—He must have been very hungry indeed!

Maxwell. Poor old Phylax! thou once didst rescue me from a robber; and I then promised to feed thee carefully till thy death.—Do, Harry, give Phylax your roll. (*He hastens away*)

Harry. (*Running out with the roll*) Phylax! Phylax!

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE I.—*A Public Garden. In the Back Ground, a Pharo Table; DEMPSTER and several other Gamblers sitting around it. Apart from the rest, and nearer to the front of the Stage, sits HARRINGTON, with a Bottle of Wine before him: He rests his Chin on the Head of his Cane; and seems to take little Notice of what is going on around him. On the opposite Side sits DUMFRIES, smoking a Pipe. MAXWELL walks about with an Air of deep affliction: casts a scrutinizing Look, now on HARRINGTON, now on DUMFRIES; then turns for some Moments to the Pharo Table. Despair, Scorn, and a misanthropical Aversion for all around him, writhe his Countenance with convulsive Movements of the Features.*

(*For some time, only single words relative to the Game, such Cinq et Roi—Paroli—Dame et Dame—Soli, &c.—are heard from the Pharo Table.*)

DEMPSTER, at last rising, advances; views MAXWELL with a keen Eye, measuring him, as it were, from Head to Foot; then beckons to him.

MAXWELL (*Approaching with an air of hesitation*)

DO you wish to speak with me, Sir?

Dempster. Yes, Sir; I wish to have the honour of your acquaintance.

Maxwell. A very obliging wish! Can I, in any manner serve you?

Dempster. I believe that you can.

Maxwell. I shall do it with pleasure.

D 2

Dempster

Dempster. But I, perhaps, mistake, in regard to you?—

Maxwell. Not—if you suppose me an honest man.

Dempster. Honest?—yes—certainly——*we are*, among ourselves, the most honest people living.

Maxwell. I do not understand you, Sir.

Dempster. Why; we account to each other, with the strictest honour, for whatever we earn; one, for instance, plays at Brookes's—another at White's:—and they share the winnings equally between them, without the concealment of a single shilling.

Maxwell. Very well, Sir! But what is this to me?—

Dempster. You are a deep one: but I have found you out.—I know my men!—Place any stranger you please, at the pharo-table: and within a quarter of an hour, I will tell you, exactly, how far he understands the game.

Maxwell. You think that I understand it?

Dempster. (*Smiling*) Do not dissemble,—Pray, don't:—I have long observed you.—There is, among us, a novice whom we dislike:—he who now holds the cards.—Your looks,—the air of bitter scorn, with which you, more than once, viewed his blunders,—have convinced me, that I address myself to one who is a master in our profession. Only confirm me in this opinion, by a trial;—and your fortune is made!—

Maxwell. How, Sir?

Dempster. I do assure you, Sir, that you will find yourself in a company of honest good-humoured fellows; who look upon the whole world, as a large gambling-house; in which every one banks his talents, and where no one loses but he who punts the cried-down coin of *virtue*.

Maxwell. (*Struggling to restrain his indignation*) Sir! your principles are as new to me, as your game, to which I am an utter stranger.

Dempster. Sure, Sir, you jest?—You are, perhaps, already connected with a different company. If so, then (*putting his fingers on his lips,*) you can be silent! Brothers of a trade must not betray one another. But if you hesitate on another score; if you mistrust my character;—I would have you to know, Sir, that I am a man of known and undoubted honour. I am well received in all the first houses. My name is Baron Dempster. To-night I shall
be

be at the Dutchess's rout in Pall-mall. (*He turns from Maxwell, and sits again down at the pharo-table*)

Maxwell. (*Continues standing, with his arms folded*) So, then! If I chuse to become a rascal, I shall not want for bread,—I may riot in plenty.—A rascal!—No.—Baron Demplter is well received in the first houses.—(*With a laugh of mingled scorn and anguish*) Oh! for your first houses! Ha! ha! ha!

SCENE II.—*Enter FLOOD, who walks about, looking among the company, with an air of keen observation and enquiry.*

Maxwell. (*Perceiving him*) Ha! This man seems in eager search for something. O that he may want work!—work that I can perform!

Flood. (*Coming up to him, and looking earnestly on him*)

Maxwell. Sir, if you want a man who will be happy to earn a shilling; he is before you.

Flood. It is exactly such a man I want.

Maxwell. Pray, then, take me; if the task be not above my strength?

Flood. The task is the easiest in the world. I am engaged in a law-suit: my opponent has produced three witnesses, who have sworn in his favour: I must bring six to outswear them. Five I have procured. If you will be the sixth, you may earn a guinea in an instant?

Maxwell. I—a witness—in a cause entirely unknown to me?—

Flood. What of that?—Sure, you know the practice of the courts!—A bell rings. You step forward,—kiss the bible,—are examined,—answer agreeably to instructions with which I shall have furnished you,—after a few minutes, walk off, with a guinea in your pocket,—and spend it as you please.

Maxwell. And, pray, what shall I do with my conscience?

Flood. Poh! poh! Such things are done, in London, every day. Besides, a juster cause than mine, was never brought

brought before a court. My opponent is a swindler, a fraudulent banker, one Belton.

Maxwell. (*With anxious surprise*) Belton!—

Flood. Ay! Belton.—Do you know the man?

Maxwell. Know him!—I do know him.

Flood. You cannot know any thing good of him.

Maxwell. I cannot say that I do. But, if I were even thoroughly acquainted with the particulars of your cause; against this man, I cannot come forward as a witness.

Flood. Why not?

Maxwell. He is my enemy.

Flood. So much the better!

Maxwell. He has reduced me to misery.

Flood. Has he? Better still!—You shall have your revenge; and bear witness, for me, against him.

Maxwell. No, Sir! I am in want, in extreme want. A guinea would be, to me, a treasure. Yet, not for worlds, would I earn it at your price!

Flood. As you please. Two of my witnesses cost me but half what I offered you: and I should easily find a dozen before night, ready to serve me for the same money. (*Flood retires*)

Maxwell. (*Looking earnestly after him*) O God! O God! How capricious and false are the moral judgments of men!—I may send the fellow who picks my pocket, to the gaol, and to the gallows: yet such wretches as those walk proudly about, and are respected as gentlemen!

SCENE III.—JOHN HARTOPP *bears across the stage, a burthen, which he puts down, for a moment; while he removes his hair from his face, and wipes the sweat from his brow.*)

Maxwell. This is a heavy burthen, friend.

Hartopp. Very heavy!

Maxwell. To what place do you bear it?

Hartopp. To Golden Square.

Maxwell. You have, still, a good way to go.

Hartopp. A great way.

Maxwell.

Maxwell. How much are you paid for the carriage?

Hartopp. A shilling.

Maxwell. It is little enough.

Hartopp. But, I can earn my three or four shillings a day.

Maxwell. And does that support you?

Hartopp. Be sure, it does.

Maxwell. Have you a wife and children?

Hartopp. Aye; a very good creature for a wife, and three fine boys.

Maxwell. And, what little you earn, supports them all?

Hartopp. Little! it is enough: we never yet went to bed hungry. On Sundays, we have our hot dinner, and our pint of ale, as well as other folks.

Maxwell. And you are happy?

Hartopp. Happy! aye, master, that we are, in our very hearts. When I come home at night, my three boys run so joyfully about me, and their mother brings the dish for supper, full of hot potatoes;—there is a relish for you, master!—there is a relish!

Maxwell. (*Aside*) Good! very good! since so little suffices to man, for happiness, and for the support of life; why may not I procure that little? (*Aloud*) Let me try, friend, whether I cannot lift up your load?

Hartopp. With all my heart.

Maxwell. Put it on my shoulders. I wish to try, how far I can carry it.

Hartopp. (*Laughing*) Ha, ha, ha! you will find it too heavy for you, master. (*He puts it on Maxwell's shoulders, who sinks under it to the ground*)

Hartopp. It won't do.

Maxwell. (*Rising up,--in a tone of anguish*) No, no! it will not!

Hartopp. (*Taking up his burthen*) A good day to you, master. Poor folks must not lose their time in chatting idly. (*Exit.*)

Maxwell. (*Alone*) Fool!—Unlucky wretch! thou hast not for these two days tasted even a cup of tea;—and thou wouldst carry a porter's load! (*He wrings his hands in despair*) Poor Robert! Is it then come to this? a man must be either a villain or a beggar. Oh! to die for Arabella, were easier far, than to beg for her! Yet, by dying, I cannot

cannot better any thing here.—Away, away, vain pride! down thou haughty swelling heart! a wife! a child! a mother old and blind!——

SCENE IV.

Maxwell. (*Coming up to Harrington*)—Sir—

Harrington. (*Starting in surprise*). What is the matter?

Maxwell. I am unfortunate; and a man of honour is doubly so, when his distress forces him to be troublesome.

Harrington. (*Looks on him with a vacant stare*)

Maxwell. I solicit not alms! but the means of earning wages.

Harrington. (*Sarcastically*) Unfortunate? — Hear me, Sir! Are you married?

Maxwell. I am; I have the best of wives.

Harrington. Any children?

Maxwell. A fine boy.

Harrington. So! this is ever the answer. Wife and child,—child and wife;—yet unfortunate! your complaint is very unreasonable, Sir!

Maxwell. Much as I love them, I should be less miserable without my wife and my child. I should then starve and die alone!

Harrington. Want, then, constitutes the only misery you know. And whenever you meet with a person sufficiently humane to share with you his superfluity; your distress will be removed. But what remains for me, who possess, perhaps, a million of money, and am yet miserable, beyond the power of man to relieve?

Maxwell. Why should you deem your condition so hopeless? (*With looks of surprise and perplexity*)

Harrington. You, Sir, can walk about, and make your complaint: and though you should meet with nothing but unfeeling insolence from ninety-nine out of an hundred of those you apply to; perhaps the hundredth may take you kindly by the hand, and say, "Come, I will assist you."—The Bank of England is rich; yet cannot pay me for my son! The king is great, yet cannot restore to me my son!

Maxwell. Sir, I pity you.

Harrington. I want not your pity. A rich man finds every where, enow to pity him. But, a tear—a tear—I cannot weep. And no eye sheds a tear for my sorrows!—

Maxwell. That a man of such feelings should ask, in vain, for compassion and sympathy!—

Harrington. No, no; cousins of every degree, are flocking about me; rubbing their eyes with onions; and laughing behind their handkerchiefs; “So! Old Harrington!” say they, “is now childless! A rich inheritance! turned of seventy!—he cannot weather it long!—

Maxwell. Poor man!—

Harrington. Poor, indeed!—Yes, Sir, though master of more than half a million of money; I may envy you who crave my charity. People have too long misnamed me, the rich Harrington. But nobody knew what was the only riches I valued: nobody knew, that my George, my only child, was, to me, all my wealth!

Maxwell. And, this son died?

Harrington. Ah! had he but died;—had but a fever cut him off:—I might, then, have passed some weeks in nursing him, by his bed-side: hope might have contended, for a while, with fear, in my bosom: and if his illness had been increased, in spite of all our cares, to the last agony; paternal affection might have wrung from my heart this last prayer:—“O God! end his sufferings!”—But, thus—thus!—in the bloom of youth——in all the flush and vigour of health——he was drowned, Sir, was drowned yesterday, while bathing!—

Maxwell. Unhappy father!—

Harrington. No more a father.—Yesterday, when the sun rose, my son lived—To-day, no one bade me—Good-morrow! I stand, alone, on the brink of the cold yawning grave! There is none to take me by the hand, and bid me—good-night! while I descend into that dark and silent abode!—

Maxwell. And, was there no means to save him?—

Harrington. None.

Maxwell. The Humane Society——?

Harrington. Could——

Maxwell. Have not hundreds been recovered by the means of this benevolent institution?

E

Harrington.

Harrington. True. I am myself a member of the Society. I have known the joy of restoring a husband to his wife, a son to his mother. I may say, in truth, that I was ever one of the most active members. My associates eagerly flew to attempt the recovery of my son. No means was left untried. For hours I hung over his breathless body, pressed his pallid lips with mine, and employed every conceivable art to rekindle the flame of life,—in vain. I knelt till my knees were stiffened : till my voice was hoarse, I called on the God of mercy. God heard me not. No, he heard me not. I have lost my all. Nothing remains to me, but money, money which I would give all away ten thousand times—to hear but once more the voice of my son, even as he called to me for the last time—“Father!”—from the stream.—Go, Sir; leave me, leave me alone! You have made me to open my lips to complain;—and I had resolved not to complain. You have brought burning tears into my eyes;—and I had determined not to weep. No, my grief shall suffocate me in silence. And should you still talk of misfortunes, after having thus seen the lacerated bleeding heart of a father,—then, Sir,—then you are a common beggar! (*Arises and withdraws*)

Maxwell. He wrongs me, cruelly wrongs me. But his heart is full. All his sensibilities are absorbed in the contemplation of his own griefs. But it is, surely, less miserable to see one's darling child lie dead before you,—than to behold that child pine away by inches, and perish for hunger. Time passes. Once I could feel for the sufferings of others. The tale now whistles by my ears, but cannot touch my writhing heart.

SCENE V.—MAXWELL *accofts* DUMFRIES.

Maxwell. Sir, you are, I believe, a man of business.

Dumfries. I am a man of business, Sir.

Maxwell. You may, perhaps, want a person who can write and calculate accompts, understands book-keeping by double and single entry, and is master of the French and English languages.

Dumfries.

Dumfries. (*After viewing him*) Upon what terms, pray, would you expect to be employed?

Maxwell. I ask, but a bare maintenance.

Dumfries. That is to be obtained.

Maxwell. My benefactor! my deliverer!

Dumfries. Are you willing to go out to India?

Maxwell. (*Alarmed*) To India!—

Dumfries. If you can give me a respectable reference for your character; I am willing to procure you a writer's place in the service of the East India company.

Maxwell. I am married.

Dumfries. That is against you.

Maxwell. I have a child, and a mother who is old and blind.

Dumfries. Then you will not do for me. But if you can leave your wife, your child, and your mother, you may go on board within a few days.

Maxwell. Leave my wife and child?—my life sooner!—

Dumfries. Who talks of your leaving life, Sir?—

Maxwell. Sir, I cannot leave them.

Dumfries. As you please. (*He knocks out his pipe*) Think over the matter by yourself. You are not the first man that has left a wife and a child. You will not be the last. Beware of losing an opportunity, such as may not, every day, recur to you. You will find me, every morning, at the Golden Anchor, near Grosvenor-square.—(*Exit.*)

(*The GAMBLERS rise from the table in the back-ground, and withdraw.*)

SCENE VI.—MAXWELL *alone.*

Maxwell. O God! thou openest to me, a path of escape out of this maze of suffering—but, a path I cannot tread!—Leave Arabella!—Leave my mother, aged and blind!—No:—Never!—(*He walks about wildly*) Are there no other means? Cannot I take a brush, and present myself to clean people's shoes, as they pass? No honest shift that will supply bread to my family, can be disgraceful. (*Pauses.*) Or, shall I follow the gambler, and make

myself his accomplice in robbery? Would it be an unpardonable crime, to commit an act of robbery—but *for once* in my life?—And this, to prevent all that is dear to me, from perishing for hunger?—No, Maxwell! think of the noble soul of thy wife! Do not wound her heart with worse than the pangs of death. (*Pauses again*) That gentleman was in the right: better, better far, to leave wife and child, than, by my presence, to enhance their sufferings. Must *they* not live without *me*, because *I* cannot live without *them*? I will be gone: I will go to India. Fool! Will that give them bread? Oh! could I, but by any honest means, secure to them subsistence; I would set off for India, this moment. They might weep for my absence. But, if they had only bread to eat; what, though they should moisten it with their tears? (*Again a pause*) O God! thou who feedest the fowls of the air, who clotheest the callow young in the nest!—pour but one ray of cheering light into my soul! Shew me only a protector for my wife! (*He gazes wildly around him*) Faces, every where,—human faces;—but, no men—no humanity! (*Shudders*) Ah! there! Walwyn comes. (*With a faint hollow voice*) Walwyn! (*Stops, as if suddenly rooted to the ground, and pores with downcast eyes*) What was this? What darted through my brain? Oh—h—h! I shudder at the thought! Let me grasp thee, thou terrible stranger! Thou wearest a hideous mask; yet art, perhaps, destined the saviour of my wife. Stay! let me accustom myself to thy view! (*Pauses.*) Well! And what matters it? Thou goest to India,—art dead to Arabella,—but, wilt live in her remembrance, while Harry lives.—Thy blind and aged mother is provided for.—Happy! (*deeply affected*) happy!—Why not?—Is she to be miserable, because I am so?—Do'st thou love her as dearly as she deserves?—(*With calm dignity*) Well, then! true love is capable of sacrificing even itself.—(*Pauses*) No! It is not any malignant influence, imposing on my disordered fancy!—This is the path which fate points out,—the only one. No tenderness for my own feelings shall draw me back.—(*Casts a look towards Walwyn*) O God! Let me find him, as I wish!—As I wish?—No,—as I am forced to wish!—

SCENE

SCENE VII.—Enter WALWYN.

Maxwell. (*In great agitation walks up to him and grasps his hand*) Good Walwyn! how fortunate it is to me, that you happen to come this way!

Walwyn. I shall rejoice if I can make it so.

Maxwell. I have much to say to you.

Walwyn. Shall I attend you to my house?

Maxwell. (*Looks around*) We are alone, I must give my heart vent.

Walwyn. You are exceedingly agitated. Say, how can I serve you?

Maxwell. You, this morning offered me your assistance.

Walwyn. Sincerely, from my heart.

Maxwell. And soon after sent me a most generous present.

Walwyn. You mistake, Maxwell.

Maxwell. I do not. These lines (*Producing Walwyn's Letter from his pocket*) are in your own handwriting. They have indelibly impressed themselves upon my heart. They bespeak the worth of the man whom I robbed of the object of his love, the man who ought to hate me!

Walwyn. How could I hate the man who has made Arabella happy?

Maxwell. I am, indeed, deeply affected by the delicacy of your conduct; your magnanimity overpowers me. I was never accustomed to receive favours. Take back your present. (*Forces the paper into his hand.*)

Walwyn. Why, Maxwell, since you know that I mean well, should you disdain my assistance?

Maxwell. I shall not scruple to lay open my heart to you. It is not haughty disdain; it is self-torturing caprice. But my feelings are those of a man; and I will not strive against them.—Walwyn—of all human beings, you are the last, whose assistance I would accept.

Walwyn. Unreasonable caprice!

Maxwell. Is it caprice? can a man of such feelings name it so;—when my whole heart revolts, with horror, against the idea of assistance from you? my Arabella loved you.

you. To assist us, would give you a degree of merit, in the eyes of my wife, which I could not patiently think of. Could I look upon her without shame and anguish, while her conscious looks might seem to tell me,—that we were supported by the bounty of him, who was once, my rival in her love? Could I bear to reflect,—could I suffer her to reflect while we eat each meal, —“ This morsel we owe to Walwyn: but for his charity, we might starve?”—No, no, generous man, I should thank you, and—hate you!—

Walwyn. Maxwell, drive all such thoughts from your mind. Your misfortunes have disordered your imagination. What are a thousand pounds to me? Besides, it is but a loan. A man like you, must soon rise by industry and activity, above misfortune. You shall, at a future time, repay my money—with interest, if you will have it so.

Maxwell. And, to whose hand, should I then, owe my restoration from ruin?

Walwyn. But, Maxwell, will you leave your family to the agonies of extreme want, rather than suppress these over-refined feelings?

Maxwell. You mistake me, Walwyn, my family shall not be left to pine in want. It is but for myself, I refuse your proffered kindness. *Me* you shall not relieve;—*me alone!*

Walwyn. Whom else?

Maxwell. (*Pausing, endeavours to summon up all his firmness*) Walwyn, I have an important question to put to you,—a most interesting question!

Walwyn. (*With anxious expectation*) Well?

Maxwell. Do you still love Arabella?

Walwyn. (*Evasively*) Why?

Maxwell. By your belief in that Infinite and Supreme Being who is in us and about us,—by your benevolence and my despair,—I conjure you, answer me sincerely!—Do you still love Arabella?

Walwyn. Good God! Maxwell, what means this?—your lips tremble, your eyes roll——

Maxwell. You would force upon me a present of a thousand pounds,—will you not, in mercy, utter a few syllables to relieve my despair? Pity these agonies, this almost alienation of mind, under which you behold me!—

Walwyn. Though I am at a loss to conceive, how my
I
answer

answer can give you relief; yet your demand is so earnest and so singular, and my feelings are so pure and sanctified, that I do not hesitate a moment to confess—I still love Arabella!

Maxwell. Is your love but a pensive remembrance?—or is it lively as the cherished dream of yesterday? have the colours of the picture faded?—or are they still bright and vivid?

Walwyn. A man who has for these eight years, studiously avoided all intercourse with you,—a man who has religiously respected the rights of the husband, and the virtue of the wife,—may answer without hesitation;—I still love her, as on the first day when I wished her mine! She was my all; she is so still; till death, she shall continue so!—I have now answered you, Maxwell. But why would you urge the enquiry? why strive to make old wounds bleed afresh, or inflict new ones?

Maxwell. I have gained what I wished. The decisive moment is come. (*After a pause, he proceeds*) Walwyn! will you be a son to my mother, — a father to my son, — a husband to my Arabella?

Walwyn. What is your meaning?

Maxwell. Yes; these are the conditions. Give me, with the faith of a brother, your hand; and promise, that you will support my old blind mother, and will bear with the frailties of her humour; promise, that you will form my Harry's mind, will bring him up to be an honest man, and will provide for him, if I shall be myself unable to do it?

Walwyn. Maxwell, whither does your imagination wander?

Maxwell. And lastly, you must pledge to me your solemn oath, that you will make Arabella happy!—Vain fool! he has loved her these eight years, even while she was mine; as his own, he will adore her!—No, this oath is unnecessary.

Walwyn. Recollect your bewildered senses. Thou art beside thyself. Dost thou meditate suicide?

Maxwell. I do not; why should I anticipate the work of hunger or despair? I am in my right senses, good Walwyn! I know what I am doing. For these three days I have in vain sought to find the means of earning subsistence for my family. I must either see them starve—or must beg or steal for them. At last, however, I have found a man who will supply sustenance to myself, if I choose to go to India.

Walwyn.

Walwyn. And you are willing—

Maxwell. Yes—to go—if Walwyn promise to be to my wife, and child, and mother, the guardian and protector I can prove no longer!—Go,—if in thee, Walwyn, I may leave behind me a brother!

Walwyn. Nay, remain here; and you shall experience me a brother.

Maxwell. Never more shall my eyes view my native shore; never shall my woe-worn aspect disturb your tranquillity. Should my unwearying industry be one day, rewarded with the acquisition of some small property; I will write to you; and you shall send my Harry to me,—but not, till you are yourself a father,—till he is no more the only filial object of his mother's love.—Walwyn! I have yet one hope left, I am not utterly bereft of every good. An hour may yet come, when happiness shall be mine. Figure to yourself the grey-haired father, awaiting as he stands on the banks of the Ganges, the arrival of his son. (*With enthusiasm*) A youth springs upon the shore—I advance with feeble steps to meet him. I behold my Arabella's features.—I sink into her arms.—Oh, moments of rapture, sufficient to repair long years of misery!

Walwyn. Dear Maxwell, your distresses have disordered your mind. A mist swims before your fancy; and through it, you see none but forms of horror. These are unreal visions. All will yet be cleared up. Confide in me. Call not that a favour, which I feel myself irresistibly urged to give. If you are still obstinate in the refusal of gratuitous assistance; let me call upon my friends; you shall not want for opportunities to earn bread to your family by your own exertion;—the harder that exertion the better,—if so you will have it.

Maxwell. Well then! do what you can. Procure me but the lowest, meanest place. Let this triumph be yours! I will endure it. But, if this way you cannot save me; then abandon me to the storm of fate, and be Arabella's husband! Do you promise me?

Walwyn. Ah! unhappy, disordered mind!

Maxwell. Promise me, good Walwyn!—Plight your faith to this unhappy being, before you! (*Holds out his arms in a suppliant attitude*)

Walwyn. Is your intention known to Arabella?

Maxwell.

Maxwell. Not yet.

Walwyn. You expect her to consent?

Maxwell. If duty no longer attach her to me; her love for you will revive.

Walwyn. Go! tell her what you intend.

Maxwell. I have then, your promise?

Walwyn. (*Giving his hand*) You have?

Maxwell. With this pressure of my hand, I betrothe her to thee. (*He becomes faint, and clings to Walwyn's arm*) Ha! I am now strong again; my family are saved. Walwyn! I thank thee! (*He sinks down, almost upon his knees*) Why dost thou stagger, wretched body? the spirit, thou shalt not prostrate. (*Sinks down.*)

Walwyn. For God's sake! Maxwell, how is it with you?

Maxwell. I scorn the pangs of hunger.—Victory!—my family are saved!

Walwyn. Why, man! you are faint with hunger!—with hunger!

Maxwell. (*Very faint*) For these two days—(*Exerting all his strength*) Victory! my family are saved!

Walwyn. (*Snatches from the table a full glass of wine, which Harrington had left upon it*) Cruel man!—drink—drink!—

Maxwell. May I drink?—my family still thirst!

Walwyn. Drink,—and rely on my word!—

Maxwell. I do rely on thy word. (*Drinks*)

Walwyn. Shall I send for a sedan-chair?

Maxwell. No, good Walwyn, I am not ill. Let me but rest a moment longer on this ground. It is my native earth.—These flowers are the same as those which I delighted, when a child, to see in their full bloom.

Walwyn. You torture me, Maxwell! Let me call a physician!

Maxwell. Thou, thou art my physician! (*Stretches out his hand.*) Assist me to rise: see! I stand! Nay, legs, do not totter!—Think not that the wine refreshed me—brother: it was your promise,—the saving of my family;—this was the reviving potion. Yet it shook me and cast me down.

Walwyn. Your want of food.—

Maxwell. Pray, speak not of my want of food. What I have suffered, is so trifling, that it deserves not to be mentioned,

tioned. Hear me, Walwyn, stoop down and hear me.—For these five weeks, Arabella has worked day and night. Her eyes are red and heavy. Her fingers are pierced to the bone. She, this morning, laid her hand on mine. (*In a whisper*) Look here, this is her blood! can you now conceive, what burns within me?—Arabella's blood is on my hand! with her blood, she has supported my mother and my child. To her, I, in return, sacrifice more than my life—my love! What a wife, I resign to you!—I will go to her,—see her for the last time,—prepare her for your visit. Within an hour, I shall expect you. Farewel! my benefactor! an hour hence, you shall reverence me—as *your* benefactor! (*Walks feebly off*)

SCENE VIII.—WALWYN *alone*.

(*Looks long after him*) God forbid, I should! yes, I will see her once more,—but without making myself unworthy of that happiness. Be still, my heart! dost thou want fortitude? fear not; I shall see her bleeding fingers; and every emotion but those of exalted virtue will die away within me. Walwyn! save the beloved of thy soul! restore to her arms the husband, and the father! Then may thine own heart whisper to thee,—thou wast worthy of her love. (*Exit hastily.*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—MAXWELL'S Apartments. ARABELLA alone. *She is at Work. Pope's Essay on Man, lies open before her. After reading a Passage, she pauses, and seems to reflect upon it.*

POETRY! how exalted are thy ends, if thou canst give comfort to the wretched! excellent Pope! why do not all the unfortunate get by heart thy verses? (*Reads*)

“ Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense,
 “ Weigh thy opinion against Providence;
 “ Call imperfection, what thou fancy’st such;
 “ Say,—here he gives too little,—there too much!”

Shame on thee, Arabella! thou, also, hast murmured!—
 (*Turns the leaf and reads*)

“ What nothing earthy gives or can destroy,
 “ The soul’s calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy,
 “ Is virtue’s prize” —————

Yes, I know this calm. It refuses not to reside in the house of want. It even now cheers my bosom!

SCENE II. Enter JANE.

Jane. O dear madam! in the street, just now, I was accosted by a gentleman, who asked me, whether I was not the servant of Mrs. Maxwell. Oh! he said a great deal about you,—a great deal indeed!

F 2

Arabella.

Arabella. Do you know who he is?

Jane. I cannot say I do,—but he must needs know you; for he asked me to tell him all about you; and while I spoke, he listened with an air of deep devotion, as one might do at prayers. His face glowed whenever he pronounced your name. Yet he was sad, and his cheeks were wet with tears.

Arabella. Say no more, Jane! (*Aside*) Ah! it was Walwyn!

Jane. He asked me, too, if you were in want of money?

Arabella. I hope you did not—

Jane. Heaven forbid!—No, says I, my mistress works night and day! and, says I, if you should want any ruffles or handkerchiefs, my mistress embroiders wonderfully neat and cheap. He now seemed quite beside himself for joy; and told me to go, fetch my goods, quick, quick, and ask for him at the next coffee-house.

Arabella. (*In confusion*) You know, Jane, I sold the last this morning;—I must now spare my fingers for a few days. Go! do not let the good gentleman wait in vain.

Jane. With what an air of disappointment will he look, when he sees that I bring him nothing!

SCENE III.—ARABELLA *alone*.

Is this my boasted peace? this the virtue on which I valued myself? At the name of a stranger my heart throbs, and the blood rushes into my cheeks.—A stranger!—Is Walwyn to me a stranger? Can he *ever* be as a stranger to me? Oh, God! thou knowest whether he deserved it? (*Weeps gently*) Oh, I still love him; he was my first, my only love. Reason and a daughter's duty might deny him my hand, but could not banish him from my heart.—Can it be a crime, that I, in vain, strive to forget him?—No, Walwyn, no, thou excellent, and generous man, to whom I once plighted my faith, and who didst so nobly release it;—thy resignation—thy silent suffering—the magnanimity thou hast this day displayed,—where is the way of captivating a woman's heart,—if it be not this?

SCENE

SCENE IV.—Enter MAXWELL.

Arabella. (*Endeavours to assume an air of serenity*)—Welcome, dear Robert!

Maxwell. (*Walks backward and forward in violent emotion, then stops before her, and attempts several times to speak, but is still unable.*)

Arabella. What is the matter? something oppresses your mind!

Maxwell. (*With a faint and hollow voice repeats the words*) Welcome, dear Robert! (*After a long pause*) Tell me, Arabella, would you feel it hard, to say, farewell, dear Robert!

Arabella. What a question!—Death alone can command husband and wife to bid each other farewell!

Maxwell. It is not always so.—There are cases, in which reason and their mutual love may command a wedded pair to part.

Arabella. Reason!—That you men, know.—Love is better understood by us.—And, it is the command of love to husband and wife—‘Journey on, hand in hand, together, to the grave.’

Maxwell. Can you suppose, Arabella, that aught but love for you, can thus oppress my heart, thus convulsively strain my whole frame?

Arabella. To what does all this lead?

Maxwell. We—must part.

Arabella. We?

Maxwell. I have found a place. I go to India.

Arabella. (*In terrified alarm*) To India? (*Collecting herself*) Well, I go with you!

Maxwell. No, Arabella; that cannot, must not be.

Arabella. Where then must I remain?

Maxwell. Here, with my mother, with Harry.

Arabella. I cheerfully submit to any trial which fate imposes: but that you, also, should try me!—

Maxwell. Hear me, dearest, best of wives! I have summoned up all my remaining strength of mind. Interrupt me not; for it is extremely difficult for me to pursue any connected train of ideas. Hear the unalterable resolution which

which the iron-hand of necessity has compelled me to take.—Might I even take you with me; were I capable of dragging you, in return for all that you have sacrificed for me, into a foreign land;—yet, my mother, my poor, old mother, must not be left blind, forlorn, and helpless. Can I, at once, deprive her of daughter, son, and grandson?—Can I abandon her to public charity? Must her eyes flow with tears of anguish, when they can no longer light her steps? You and her little darling may assist her to endure the loss of me! *You* will not forsake her,—no, not even then, when you no longer bear her name!

Arabella. No longer bear her name!

Maxwell. Arabella, this is an awful hour!—To me who have, in your arms, enjoyed the divinest bliss of love,—to me, who to preserve you mine, would gladly shed my life's blood to its last drop,—to me your welfare is ten thousand times more precious than my own.—Oh! Oh!—I bid farewell to far more than life—when I thus *solemnly renounce you!*

Arabella. *You!*—renounce me!

Maxwell. Accursed be the wretch, who, when his own hopes, his own joys are in one scale,—and, in the other the happiness of her he loves,—can a moment hesitate to make himself the sacrifice!—You gave me your hand, because your father declared, that he should not otherwise have peace in his mind, And should not I resign that hand, when your welfare, your preservation, demand this of me? Did you love your father with affection more sincere than mine for you? Away, ye boasted heroes of antiquity! who knew but to die for those who were dear to you! I shall do what requires a far harder effort,—resign my wife into the arms of another husband—hide my face—and hie me hence!

Arabella. God of mercy! has suffering distracted him to madness?

Maxwell. Hear me! Oh, hear me to a close! I release thee from the vows of connubial faith! erase from thy youth, these last eight years!—Forget what thou wast to me;—but, ah! forget not my love!—You are, again, free—free to dispose of your hand and your heart!—Walwyn still loves you:—Reward his unshaken constancy.—Be *his* wife, his happy wife!—But, ah! forget not my love!—He will be a father to Harry!—to my mother, a son!—These duties, he has sworn to perform!—His
tenderness

tenderness will revive the fading roses on Arabella's cheeks.—She shall, yet, remember, with delight, the sweets of her early love. And while, hand in hand, you move onward together, in a path strewn with flowers,—Oh, do not, do not then forget my love!

Arabella. (*Throws herself into his arms*) Most generous, most heroic of men! how little have I known thy worth! to what a giddy height dost thou call me to look up to the elevation of thy sentiments!—I supposed that I had thoroughly known all the worth and magnanimity of your mind; it is a temple awful and sublime, above human imagination, which you open to my view!—Forfake you!—*I forfake you.* No! had I even never loved you before; this day, this day alone would knit my heart to yours, with indissoluble ties!—I can also distinguish what is noble and good. I can feel all the value of what you would do for me. To feel it is my pride,—my shame.—*I forfake you!* Do but try to tear yourself from me! I will still cling to you. Under every zone, will I attend and serve you! under the south pole, I will defy the arrows of the inhospitable savage; amid the cold horrors of the farthest north, I will dig for you, a cave in the snows!—

Maxwell. (*Deeply affected*) Arabella!

Arabella. You would go to India!—would see Indian wives throw themselves, with triumph, to perish on the funeral pile of a husband!—how must you, then, scorn the faithless English wife who could throw her husband from her arms, to wander alone, through the world; because he was—not harsh—not unfaithful,—but poor!

Maxwell. Arabella!

Arabella. You are the father of my child! You have taught me to know the enjoyment of maternal love; the dearest upon earth! Do you fancy that I would purchase wealth at the price of ingratitude? It may be, that the world would not reproach me. To gold the world will pardon any crime. A dinner, a ball, will purchase friends, and panegyrists, in any number.—But here—here (*laying her hand on her breast*)—is there a more wretched, a more despicable being, than she who dares not look within—who cannot look upon the horrors of her own heart, without starting back, aghast? Want and hunger may unnerve my strength; my conscience defies their power.—No;—
father

father of my child, I quit thee not! (*Clasps him in her arms*)

Maxwell. (*Pressing her to his bosom*) O God! what a moment of felicity hast thou vouchsafed to me! Ye great ones, ye deities of the earth, behold, and envy! Angel-woman! I had thought that I knew and prized the full measure of thy worth!—How much dost thou exceed my boldest expectations!—Enough, Arabella; it is enough! (*Withdrawing from her arms*) We cannot arrest the movements of the wheel of fate. I have no choice between parting and starving—Lament me as a husband whom death has ravished from you. The worthy Walwyn will not chide your tears.

Arabella. How! Still this sad purpose?

Maxwell. It is fixed.

Arabella. But, if you have solemnly renounced me—I as solemnly declare, that I cannot renounce you. Go!—embark!—Shall I, think you, find no ship to convey a disconsolate wife, after her husband, to India? With my Harry by my side, will I ask alms at the harbour; with my Harry in my hand, I will present myself before the first captain who is about to sail.—I solemnly vow, Robert, I will follow thee. So may God hear my dearest prayers!

Maxwell. Wife of my heart, drive me not to despair! Force me not to seek refuge in a country to which thou can'st not follow me.

Arabella. There is no such country.

Maxwell. (*Muttering*) Beyond the grave.

Arabella. Even there will I follow thee.

Maxwell. Mother of my Henry, thou hast a son!

Arabella. And thou hast a mother!

Maxwell. Arabella, I understand your meaning.—You would make the sacrifice easier to me. I would renounce—even your love.—You ask—but my life!—

Arabella. You are ill, Robert—very ill!—I will go find Harry. He shall effect that which I have attempted in vain, drive away the fiend of melancholy, and smile hope into your heart! (*Exit hastily*)

SCENE V.—MAXWELL *alone*.

Die?—Yes; it is easier far to die. Thanks, thou best of women! thou hast pronounced the sentence of my death!—No; into that unknown country thou wilt not follow me.—Thy helpless child is the pledge that thou wilt live.—Ha! thou hast lightened my breast of a mountain's weight.—How the pleasure of this new idea glows through my whole frame!—A freezing coldness chilled my blood. But Arabella has breathed a divine spark that electrizes my whole body and soul.—Yes! my death will put all again into its due order.—She will weep,—oh, she *will* weep!—But time will combine her in happy union with the object of her first love—an union that will dry up all her tears. And, when returning spring shall dress with flowers the turf that covers my poor remains, she will give her hand, over my grave, to the worthy Walwyn!—And now, Robert, thou hast well-nigh drained the cup of sorrow—wilt thou now shrink with loathing from the last dregs?—Am I as one of those fools whom a satiety of sensual enjoyment drives to rid themselves of an existence of which they are unworthy?—as those ideots of superstition who cast themselves to be crushed under the chariot-wheels of their idol!—No! I die for my wife, for the beloved of my soul!—I die for my mother! for my child! Let the marble statue, the brazen bust, be consecrated to him who dies for his country!—My grave will not be always unhonoured, should it even be dug in a cross-way!—

SCENE VI.—*Enter ARABELLA leading HARRY by the hand.*

Arabella. (In a tone of soothing gentleness) Here is Harry. He intreats you to remember, that you are his father!

Harry. (Caressing his father) I have not seen you, father, for a long while.

G

Maxwell.

Maxwell. (*Absorbed in gloomy enthusiasm, without looking at the child*) Boy, what callest thou a long while?—Break the frame through which the soul at so dear a rate acquires its perceptions,—and time and space are vanished!

Arabella. Harry, your father intends to go on a journey.

Harry. Won't you take me with you, father?

Maxwell. No, Harry.

Harry. Are you going far?

Maxwell. The swallow journeys after the spring.

Harry. Will you soon return?

Maxwell. Every thing returns. The crumbling dust revives in flowers.

Harry. Won't you bring me something?

Maxwell. What I yet have, I leave to you—my blessing!

Arabella. Robert! cease from torturing me thus.—For these some weeks past, I thought I suffered much;—to-day, however, I feel that to have been little!

Maxwell. Have patience with me. It shall soon be otherwise—soon.—(*Muttering*) Man! why delay?—(*He looks sorrowfully upon Harry, lifts him up, and kisses his forehead*) God bless thee, my son! (*Approaches Arabella, takes her hands, and eagerly kisses her fingers*) Accept my thanks, my dearest wife! (*He turns away from her, puts his hands, with trembling emotion, on Harry's head, and utters in agony*) God bless thee, my son! (*Then, throwing himself into Arabella's arms*) Thanks to you, dearest wife! (*Now raises his weeping eyes to heaven*) Oh, God! these last tears are yet bitterer than I imagined!

Arabella. Robert! what is it you mean to do? Robert, pity my distress!

Maxwell. Be comforted, Arabella, I go not to India.

Arabella. May I trust that you do not?—

Maxwell. I do not!—I have yet a friend whom I had shamefully forgotten.—To him will I go—from him will I intreat assistance.—Pray for me, that he may receive me kindly!

Arabella. A friend?—You deceive me?

Maxwell. Ah, Arabella! this hour allows not deception!

Arabella. Who is he? where is he? why have you never named him to me?

Maxwell.

Maxwell. Because, in our prosperity, our best friends are often slighted. Yet, fear not; he will receive me kindly; his arms are ever open to the wretched!

Arabella. Then, go; and your good angel attend you!

Maxwell. I go, guided by the angel of love!—Farewel, Arabella!—When next we meet, we shall be happy!

Arabella. God grant we may!

Maxwell. (*Takes both her hands, and shakes them, in great anguish*) Till we meet again——

Arabella. It will be soon.

Maxwell. At break of day. (*He retires into a corner, wrings his hands unconsciously, makes a severe effort to restrain his tears, undergoes with deep agony the struggle of parting, at last summons up his fortitude, and says*) The hardest task is over!—Now to my mother! (*Rushes into his mother's room*)

Arabella. (*Kneeling, raises her hands and eyes to heaven*)

Harry. What are you doing, mother?

Arabella. I pray for your father.

Harry. I will also pray for him. (*Kneels down by his mother.—After some moments, Maxwell rushes out of his mother's room. He is going; but, at sight of his wife and child, stops in great agitation. He stands as if rooted to the ground; the muscles of his face are convulsed; his wild, maddened agony dissolves at last into tears. He slowly, and with trembling emotion, lifts up his hands, presses them to his eyes, and reels off*)

SCENE VII.—*Enter the MOTHER of MAXWELL, groping her way.*

Mother. Robert! what means this?—Is no one here?

Arabella. (*Arising from the posture of prayer*) Dear mother, we are here.

Mother. You and my son?

Arabella. I and Harry.

Mother. Where is my son?

Arabella. Gone to a friend.

G 2

Mother.

Mother. But, why was he so deeply affected when he took leave of me?

Arabella. He is uneasy in mind, to-day.

Mother. Comes bursting into my room—kisses my hand—wets it with his tears—bids me farewell—thanks me for my love—says I shall not want—then runs off, before I can even ask him—“Robert, what means this?”—And after all, he goes to a friend!—One should have thought he was going to die!

Arabella. (*Starts with violent emotion*) God forbid!

Mother. Is it right thus to alarm an old, feeble mother? Every limb of me yet shakes with the fright. Come, Harry, lead me back to my chair, that I may recover myself. (*Exeunt*)

Arabella. (*Stands for some time in amazed and speechless anguish, occasioned by the idea which the old woman's words have awakened in her mind*) No, no—he will not—three other lives, he knows, depend upon his. (*Steps to the table, and turns several leaves in the book upon it, while her looks are fixed on the ground*) No—that he never will do. (*She strives to compose her mind, sits down at the tambour-frame, and begins to work: but her agitation is renewed; her tears fall; she rises*) My tears will spoil the work. (*Takes up her knitting-needles; but her arms sink down*) Robert! Robert! thou hast unnerved my last strength; I can work no more; I can only pray!

SCENE VIII.—Enter WALWYN.

Arabella. (*Perceiving him, starts convulsively*) Ha, Walwyn!

Walwyn. (*Approaches with a modest and timid air*) After eight years of separation, I again see Arabella.

Arabella. (*Endeavouring to compose herself*) Arabella Maxwell is happy to receive an old friend in her house.

Walwyn. The title of your friend invests me with precious rights.

Arabella. Your own magnanimity has this day invested you with rights still superior. Accept the thanks which, as a mother and a wife, I owe you.

Walwyn. Arabella's thanks were to me an invaluable prize

prize—had not the offer for which they were made, been disdained!—

Arabella. That offer was not the less a favour. It flowed, I know, from the purest motives.

Walwyn. This testimony gives me pride. But I am conscious, that I have deserved it. (*With animation*) Yes, Arabella, I am yet entirely such as I was eight years since. Fortune has, indeed, made me rich; but my heart, my soul are still the same. (*He perceives Arabella to be under embarrassment, and moderates his ardour*) Pardon, pardon me for having hinted at what is no more to be mentioned. At sight of you, I felt, as an old man might do, who, meeting with an ancient friend, remembers his spring of life.—And I seemed to myself, for the moment, to grow young again. Ah, no wonder, that your dear image should to me dissolve into a dream, the realities of eight long years: and should, with the efficacy of enchantment bring back the moment, when you last gave me your hand. Your cheeks were then, as now, pale; tears then flowed from your eyes, as now.

Arabella. And I then intreated of you, as I now do, to spare me.

Walwyn. For eight long years have I avoided your presence. The desire of your husband, brings me, this day, hither, Arabella! Oh knew you but the hopes he would teach me to conceive! No, never did the tempter wear a more seductive guise!—

Arabella. You allude to a wild idea, which my husband has recently hinted to me.

Walwyn. I guess that he kept his word!

Arabella. You—

Walwyn. Heard him with amazement.

Arabella. And let me hope—corrected him—gently—

Walwyn. Oh! Arabella!—

Arabella. That sigh—this familiar address!—Should I be mistaken in regard to Walwyn? Should he be capable of trampling on the unfortunate wretch whom he sees writhing at his feet, in the dust; then, oh, then would I be compelled to let him look into my heart,—then would I repeat to him those last words which he heard, eight years since, from my lips.—Do you still remember them?

Walwyn. They are imprinted on my heart.

Arabella. Walwyn, I said,—I love you. Fate unites
me

me to another. Were you capable of asking me to tear this bond asunder;—did but one look of yours, invite me to it:—I should lose my last consolation—the consolation of loving and respecting you.—On my hand you pronounced the vow of virtue.—

Walwyn. Which I have ever kept sacred.

Arabella. Holding your hand, I swore eternal fidelity to my husband. I, too, have kept my oath. I do not say I have found the task a hard one: No; I have found it easy; for, I possess a worthy man. For the first year, I might devote many a secret tear to the remembrance of the sweet dreams of younger years; yet these have been long assuaged by the new feelings of a mother's fondness.—Maxwell's wild fancy of this day, might perhaps have seemed to me less extravagant, *before I was a mother.* A childless pair might dare to part! But, now, Walwyn, now, no power on earth can break asunder the bonds of my duty.—No, not the power of love itself.

Walwyn. I have not interrupted you: for, where I love, I delight to admire. The word escaped; but, it came from the heart of a man who knows no wish of which he can need to be ashamed. Arabella misunderstood me. I listened to your husband, merely to gain time, to soothe the fever of his soul, to save him from the wild phrenzy of despair. His sufferings have awakened within him, powers hitherto unknown to himself, of which the new-born consciousness is pleasing. *To sacrifice himself for his wife*—is the splendid idea, on which he, at present, delights to gaze till his mind's eye become blind to every ray of other hope.—It is for this, that his pride devises so many refined pretences for refusing the assistance of a friend. These would he scarce resign for the sake of the salvation of his family and himself; for resigning these,—he would lose the idol of his fancy, created by love, nurtured by want and despair, raised by disordered nerves to be the tyrant of his soul.—He must be gently and softly led back from the precipice to which he is hurried. As to the night-walker,—we must not call him by his name, but, in silence stretch out our arms, that if he fall, he may sink on the bosom of a friend!

Arabella. (*Deeply affected, gives him her hand*) Excellent Walwyn!—Friend in distress!—How could I, for a moment, mistake you!—

Walwyn. It is only misfortune that excites distrust against the man who once possessed the heart of Arabella.—

Arabella. And was worthy of possessing it!—

Walwyn. Wealth could not corrupt a heart sacred to you. I came, to concert with you, the means of saving Maxwell, without suffering it to appear the work of my hand. Might we not devise some harmless artifice,—the bequest of some Nabob's fortune,—or the fortunate gaining of a capital prize in the lottery. Pray, assist me to find out something?

Arabella. Generous man! this tear—

SCENE IX.—*Enter JANE hastily.*

Jane. (*Out of breath.*) Oh madam!—how I am frightened!

Arabella. What is the matter?

Jane. There is a mob gathering in the streets.

Arabella. Well?

Jane. They talk such dreadful things!—They say—they say—that my master—

SCENE X.—*Enter LANDLORD in a bustling manner.*

Landlord. There now,—a fine sight,—a fine credit to my house.

Arabella. (*Anxiously*) What is it you want friend?

Landlord. Want? Why, I want that the corpse be not dragged hither.

Arabella. The corpse? gracious God!

Walwyn. (*At the same time*) Whose corpse?

Landlord. Don't you know, then? Mr. Maxwell has thrown himself into the Thames.

Walwyn. Oh! too late!

Arabella. (*Drops upon the ground*)

Jane. (*Kneeling by Arabella, supports her head*)

Landlord. The rent gone to the devil!—

Walwyn. Perhaps, there may be yet means of recovery.
(*Going*)

SCENE XI.—*Enter JOHN HARTOPP.*

Hartopp. Of recovery?—to be sure, there are. He is already restored to life!

Walwyn and Jane. (*At the same time*) Does he live?

Hartopp. As sure as my name is John Hartopp.—he lives.—
Jane.

Jane. Did you hear, dear madam?

Arabella. (Nods.)

Walwyn. Who saved him?

Hartopp. Why,—I drew him out of the Thames.—

Walwyn. You, friend?—Pray take this. (*Offers his purse*)

Hartopp. Pshaw, pshaw!—such things one don't like to be paid for. Besides, I can't say, after all, that it was I who saved him. For, when I laid him on the bank, he was as dead as a herring. But, there is a Society in London, do you see, who will not let a brave fellow drown himself, without a struggle to save him. Some of them were quite at hand. Great gentlemen! God knows who!—They instantly seized the body, and continued rubbing, warming, and blowing, till he opened his eyes.

Walwyn. Whither did they carry him?

Hartopp. To the house of a rich wine-merchant,—three doors from this.—He was the busiest of them all. He belongs also to the Society. (*Walwyn, Exit in haste*) God's blessing on the worthy gentlemen! When I perceived that life was again stirring in him, I had his house shewn me; for I am vastly fond of bringing good news.—That poor lady on the ground, is his wife, I dare say?

Arabella. Yes; his wife.

Hartopp. Well! mistress, do not weep now. There is no more danger. His recovery is sure.

Arabella. (*Gives her hand*)

Hartopp. (*Takes and shakes it heartily*) An empty hand, and such a look with it, pleases me better than the gentleman's full purse. I think, my girl, we should help the good lady on her legs again. (*They lift Arabella up, and seat her on a chair*)

SCENE XII.—*Enter MAXWELL, WALWYN, and HARRINGTON.*

Maxwell. (*Still of a death-like paleness in his countenance,—his hair hanging down in disorder,—his looks down-cast,—is led by Walwyn to Arabella.*)

Arabella. (*Attempting to rise, is unable, but sinks back, and holds out her arms*)

Maxwell. (*Kneels before her, and with involuntary feebleness, lays his head in her lap*)

Arabella.

Arabella. (*Bends sobbing over him.*)

Hartopp. (*Wipes his eyes with his fingers awkwardly.*)

Harrington. (*Stands lost in deep thought; and now and then casts a look on the re-united pair.*)

Maxwell. (*Lifts up his head, and looks on Arabella with an expression of anguish.*)

Arabella. (*Clasps his neck, and joins her cheek to his.*)

Walwyn. (*Beholds them with strong emotion.*)

Hartopp. By my soul, it is the man, who, this morning tried my load. He perhaps carried heavier than I.—

Harrington. Are you not the same person, who this morning asked my assistance in the tea-garden?

Maxwell. I am,

Harrington. I am, then, perhaps, in part, the author of your despair. I have much to atone for. (*Taking Walwyn aside*) Sir, I know you to be an honest man. May I entirely confide in the truth of what you just now mentioned?

Walwyn. You may, upon my honour!—

Harrington. (*To Maxwell after a short pause*)—Sir, my son was yesterday drowned in bathing. I have, this day saved your life. To-day then, has God restored to me a son. You, Sir, must supply the place of my lost child. I adopt you as mine.

Maxwell. (*Turns to him, kneels, and with ardent emotions of gratitude, stretches out his hands.*)

Harrington. I understand—no words—there is no need—your excellent wife,—will not she be my daughter?

Arabella. (*Folds her hands and smiles*)

Harrington. I understand—it is settled—I am not childless.—God forgive my murmurs.

Arabella. (*Sinks on her knees beside her husband, clasps him in her arms, and presses him to her heart.*)

Hartopp. Ha! the next load I shall have to carry, will be as light as a feather! (*The Curtain falls.*)

END OF THE PLAY.

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839. f 37

His Excellency
Lieut.-General Sir Hew Dalrymple.

A true Copy,

A. J. Dalrymple, Major and Mil. Sec.

Major General,
PROBY, Lieut.-Colonel.

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My Dear Sir,

Wimpole-street, Dec. 18, 1808.

I HAVE just received a letter from Almeida, from Brig. General Anstruther, enclosing the instruction sent by me to Major General Beresford and Lord Proby, and which the Brigadier General carried with him when he went to Almeida. He seems to think I gave it him, consequently that it is a duplicate; but as it could not be found by the above Commissioners, when the Report was drawn up, which mentions it as an enclosure, and as no copy having been kept, that document could not be produced to the Board of Inquiry, I am rather inclined to think this is the very paper, written by Lieut.-Col. Murray, and signed by me, to which reference is made in that part of the Proceedings of

was by his commenda-
M at the accompanying General Orders were issued by General Junot to
his army. These orders produced no effect whatever, although the reclamations of the inhabitants of
Lisbon were hourly increasing, and many of those presented to the Commissioners were for effects of
very great value. Much correspondence took place with General Kellerman on this subject, both in
interviews and by writing. All the communications of the General were marked by subterfuge and
vain professing, and the Commissioners were obliged at last to insist on the establishment of a Com-
mittee, to enquire into all the claims presented by the Portuguese, and to be furnished, for that purpose,
with full authority to summon persons, and to order restitution.

The City of Lisbon was informed of the institution of that Committee, by the enclosed Proclama-
tion, * signed by the Commissioners on both sides. The labours of the Committee have been attended
with the best effects; they were continued till all the French had left the Tagus, and have obtained
restitution of private and public property, to a very great amount, according to the report of the
British member of the Committee, Lieutenant Colonel Trant, whose zeal and assiduity in this duty
were most meritorious.

With respect to the church plate, the Commissioners found no article of the Treaty which authorized
them to claim it: but as the fifth article clearly defines what it is that the French army is allowed to
carry off; and as silver, in bars, and even money to an unlimited amount, cannot fairly be said to be a
military chest; they submitted their opinions upon this subject to Head Quarters, on the 5th of Sep-

3 D

tember;

* A copy is enclosed
in General Beresford's
letter of the 11th
HEW DALRYMPLE

See Immoitate